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Notes and Opinions.

Did Euodia and Syntyche Quarrel?—The passage referred to is Phil. 4:2, "I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord (R. V.)." Dr. J. C. Watts, in a recent expository article, objects to the current answer to this question, which affirms that they did quarrel. There is nothing in the passage, he says, to justify the charge; the rendering of the Authorized, as well as that of the Revised Version, is needlessly forcible. Instead of "exhort" (or "beseech"), the Apostle only wrote "call upon" or "ask." Further, the phrase "be of the same mind" does not necessarily indicate that the two women had quarreled and needed to be reconciled, as may be seen by its use in Rom. 12:16; 15:5; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 2:2; 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:8. And finally, the whole tenor of the Epistle to the Philippians is against the common idea of an allusion to a quarrel, as it is the happiest of Paul's letters, full of friendship, gratitude and confidence. It would be pleasant to think that Euodia and Syntyche did not deserve the charge which is commonly laid against them, and they should be given the benefit of any doubt, but the common interpretation does not seem to be set aside by Dr. Watts's arguments.

The Seal of Attestation and the Seal of Security.—An editorial in the *Expository Times* for December discusses the use of the term "seal" in the New Testament. The noun occurs in all sixteen times, three times in the Pauline Epistles, thirteen times in the Apocalypse; the simple verb occurs fifteen times, eight of them in the Apocalypse; and the compound verb occurs once, in the same book. The fundamental idea of the seal is, that it is its owner's representative, and it must therefore be distinguishable from the seal of every other person. There are two distinct uses to which a seal may be put: (1) it may be used as my signature to prove that a document is authentic; (2) it may be used for security, to prevent something which I have closed from being tampered with. The first use of the seal, as a means of authentication, we find to be primary and the more frequent in the New Testament, cf. John 6:27; 1 Cor. 9:2. The second use, as a means of security, is Matt. 27:66, the incident of the sealing of the tomb in which the body of Jesus had been laid; so also Rev. 5:1; 20:3. In other passages where the term occurs the context will generally at once determine which significance is intended. Indeed, Paul seems in one passage (2 Tim. 2:19) to unite both meanings in his pregnant expression.

The Gospel of Peter.—In the *Expository Times* for November, Rev. W. E. Barnes, B.D., argues for the opinion that the apocryphal gospel of Peter is later than the canonical gospels, in particular than Matthew and Luke, on grounds quite different from those which were advanced by most of those who wrote upon the subject when the fragment was first published. He makes little of the docetic tendency, but believes the gospel to be rather a document which, assuming the existence of the canonical gospels, was put forth to satisfy a natural curiosity to possess information on certain matters of detail left uncertain by the older gospel narratives. The silence of the Peter-fragment on the procession to Golgotha, and the raillery directed at Jesus on the cross, Mr. Barnes accounts for on the ground that these things are in the synoptic account and that the writer had nothing to add on these points. In narratives which the writer does give in common with Matthew or Luke, Mr. Barnes points out how in successive cases the insertion may be explained as having its motive in the addition of some minor detail satisfying curiosity. In respect to both omissions and insertions he points out analogies between the Fourth Gospel and the Petrine fragment. The argument is cumulative in character, and viewed as such is worthy of consideration.

"Touch Me Not," John 20:17.—In his recent writing on *Jesus and the Resurrection*, Principal Moule gives an attractive exegesis of Christ's words to Mary at the tomb: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but go unto my brethren and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God (R. V.)." What was the touching, why was it forbidden, and what was the connection between the "touch me not" and the "for I am not yet ascended unto the Father"? He would connect as closely as possible the prohibition "touch me not" with the commission "go unto my brethren." The Greek verb here rendered "touch" is in the present, or continuing, imperative, not in the aorist subjunctive; it therefore conveys an order, not to forbear touching him at all, but to forbear a longer, or prolonged, touching. Mary may have just laid her hand, in felt contact and no more, on his foot, or on his hand; not clinging, not embracing, only *feeling*, as if to make certain that no vision, but the living Lord, was there. The prohibition accordingly did not convey a reproof, as if she had taken a liberty, or as if she had not been reverent enough. She might be sure that he was literally, and still, on earth; so she need not any longer touch him. She was to carry the tidings to the disciples; so she must not any longer linger at his side. Jesus's words might be paraphrased in this way: Do not linger here, touching me, to ascertain my bodily reality, in the incredulity of your exceeding joy. I *am* in very fact before you, standing quite literally and locally on this plat of ground, not yet ascended to the heavens; you need not doubt, and ask, and test. And, moreover, there is another reason why not to linger thus; I have an errand for you, Mary. I desire you to go hence, and at once, for me; to go to my brethren, and to tell

them that I *am* about to go up thither ; that in glorious fact I am risen, and therefore on my way to the throne ; going to my Father and their Father, and my God and their God.

Dr. Gloag on I Peter 4:1.—In the *Homiletic Review* for November, Dr. Paton J. Gloag discusses this passage : “Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind ; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin (R. V.).” This verse is one of the things in I Peter which are “hard to be understood.” Numerous interpretations have been suggested, but they may be thrown into two classes : (1) those which apply the words to Christ throughout ; (2) those which consider that the believer is intended as he who has suffered in the flesh. The first class of interpretations would read : Therefore Christ having suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same thought or idea—that is, with the thought or idea that Christ has suffered in the flesh—for he—that is, Christ—that hath suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin—has fully expiated or atoned for sin. To this it may be objected that it does not give the obvious meaning ; further, the phrase “hath ceased from sin” can hardly mean has expiated sin so that sin is, as it were, abolished ; and, finally, the expression seems to imply even actual sinning before the time of suffering. The second class of interpretations would read : Therefore Christ having suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind—that is, with the same disposition or resolution which was in Christ ; imitate the self-sacrifice which he displayed, even to the resolution to suffer in the flesh as he suffered ; for he who has practiced self-sacrifice and possesses a readiness to suffer for Christ has ceased from sin, is delivered from the power of sin. This is a more obvious interpretation than the application to Christ. To be sure, mere suffering does not make a man cease from sin ; but the suffering mentioned is of believers after the example of Christ, and such suffering does avail to destroy the power of sin. Further, no believer has wholly ceased from sin, but the statement can be understood in a modified sense—a virtual though not an absolute cessation from sin. Lastly, this interpretation is more conformable than the first to the train of the Apostle’s thought in the exhortation which follows.

Jowett’s Commentaries on the Pauline Epistles.—Archdeacon Farrar contributes an article to the December *Review of the Churches* in which he writes of the character and work of the eminent English scholar, Benjamin Jowett, D.D., lately deceased. He says that two principles lay at the basis of Dr. Jowett’s commentaries. The first one was philological. He thought that it was an idle and misleading waste of time to pile mountain-loads of exegesis upon isolated phrases of St. Paul, who, like every other serious writer whom the world has ever seen, wrote with the intention of being understood ; and it is certain that in the main he *was* understood. His meaning is usually that which lies most obviously in his words taken in their straightforward, gram-

matical sense. When further aid is needed for the elucidation of possible ambiguities it must be sought in the idiosyncrasy of the writer, in the influence of his Jewish training, and in the historic and religious environment which reacted on his words and thoughts. Where these are insufficient to make the meaning clear, the clue is lost and cannot be recovered ; the text must then be regarded as in some cases corrupt, or in other cases the sentence must be explained as nearly as possible in relation to the context and to the views of St. Paul as expressed elsewhere. St. Paul wrote as other men write, and it is a mere delusion to treat his passing remarks and arguments as though they were full of unfathomable mysteries beyond their first plain meaning ; as though they were to be taken in all cases without hesitation and *au pied de la lettre* ; and as though they can be regarded as lending themselves to endless masses of exorbitant inferences. The second underlying principle was a theological one, resulting from the fact that Dr. Jowett was by temperament antithetic to St. Paul. He regarded theology as unfathomable by the mind of man ; that much which passes under the name is composed of mere cobwebs of human speculation, akin in spirit to the ignorant presumption of those who speak as familiarly of God as they would of a next-door neighbor ; that no small part of the technicalities of the *Summa Theologiæ* are a jangle of words ; that the views and opinions of most men on such subjects are absolutely valueless ; that angry insistence upon them tends to become pernicious bigotry, because it leads to the injurious persecution of others who may be more in the right than ourselves, and because it diverts our own attention to incomprehensible dogmas from the mercy, justice, purity, honesty and humility, which are our main and almost our sole concern.

The principle that the Bible must be interpreted like any other book, though readily lending itself to misapprehension, Dr. Farrar thinks is becoming more and more accepted as expressing at least one side of the truth. But it is also true that spiritual things must be spiritually discerned, and that there are elements in the relation of God to man which are far deeper and higher than any ordinary, shallow nature can fathom or explain. In his method of viewing theology there are some important elements of warning and of truth. It will be valuable if it impresses on our minds the conviction, which lies at the basis of all the loftiest teaching of the Hebrew prophets, and which is always predominant in the teaching of our blessed Lord himself, that mercy is better than sacrifice, and that the foundation of God standeth sure, having on it this two-fold inscription, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and "Let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Dr. Jowett's commentaries are original and sometimes suggestive, but they are marred by many inaccuracies, and must be regarded as an incursion into a domain of theological literature for which the author was not well adapted.